



Michael R. Pence, Governor
State of Indiana

Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services
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To: Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Service Providers
From: Theresa Koleszar, Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Re: Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) Request for Funding (RFF) questions and answers
Date: May 20, 2016

On May 9, 2016, The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) released a funding opportunity to approved Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Employment service providers who have a current VR provider agreement. The Request for Funding (RFF) is for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS), as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), for students with disabilities between the ages of 14-22 years of age who are eligible, or potentially eligible, for VR services.

All questions related to the RFF were to be submitted by May 16, 2016. Below are responses to all questions received by BRS prior to the deadline. The question and answer period is now closed.

As a reminder, further details on the application process are contained in the RFF itself. Responses should be submitted via email to Will Colteryahn at: William.Colteryahn@fssa.in.gov. All responses must be received no later than 3 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on June 6, 2016. The subject line of the email submission must clearly state the following: "RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR FUNDING 2016-08."



RFF 2016-08

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) for students with disabilities in need
of services who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation
services**

Q & A

Question	Response
What is the total funding available for projects, and the ceiling on any one project?	<i>The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) anticipates awarding up to 5-10 proposals at a total cost of up to approximately \$2 million, though that is subject to change based on the quantity and quality of proposals. There is no pre-determined cap per proposal, however costs will be evaluated based on the number of geographic areas and schools anticipated to receive access to PETS if the proposal is funded, as well as other factors as outlined in the Request for Funding (RFF). BRS asks that all providers submit a proposal knowing that the final funding may be negotiated.</i>
May a provider submit more than one proposal, For the purpose of being included with two different collaboration options? We are being contacted by other VR Employment agencies. How many agencies can we partner with if the other agencies are submitting the RFF proposal.	<i>A provider may submit only <u>one</u> proposal; however a provider may be included as a collaborative partner on more than one proposal. For instance, provider A may submit a proposal that includes providers B and C as collaborative partners. Provider A and B may also be included as a collaborative partner on a proposal submitted by provider D. It is the hope of BRS that there will be minimal, if any, duplication of efforts in submitted proposals.</i>
We are interested in the opportunity, but are not sure we currently have the qualifications for it. How can we find out if we are eligible for this?	<i>The only necessary qualifications for submitting a response to the RFF are that, at the time of award, you are an approved BRS provider for the provision of VR employment services. Approved VR Employment service providers receive a written agreement with BRS following an application process. If a provider is uncertain whether they have a VR Provider agreement, please submit an email to VRProvider@fssa.in.gov to confirm.</i>
As stated on page 3, "It is expected that, at minimum, respondents will collaborate with one or more additional VR Employment Service providers to carry out PETS requirements outlined in this RFF". Is there a list of other VR providers	<i>Yes, entities that have a current provider agreement for the provision of VR employment services may be viewed at: http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/5003.htm</i>

outside of the traditional list on our VR reports we receive monthly from supervisors?	
Are the contracts going to be awarded to each member of the collaborative group or will the group need to have one fiduciary manager/fiscal agent? Would each organization bill separately for services it provides?	<i>For agencies that are collaborating with one another to provide services under the RFF; only one provider will receive a contract with BRS, if awarded, and will act as the 'lead' provider or fiscal agent. The contracted provider would submit all billing to BRS, and all payments will be made to the contracted provider.</i>
Can transportation be a billable expense within the RFF proposed budget?	<i>Transportation will <u>not</u> be specifically reimbursed, as administrative expense are <u>not</u> allowable PETS expenses. Providers are encouraged to consider possible expenses they will incur when determining the fee-for-service rates to request in the cost proposal.</i>
Is the PETS the outcome of the School-to-Work Collaborative pilot project that was rolled out 2 years ago?	<i>No. PETS are activities required under a new section to the Rehabilitation Act that requires states to provide or otherwise arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. Please note that while BRS is a collaborative partner in the School-to-Work Collaborative, that project is funded by a separate federal agency.</i>
The announcement indicates that 5-10 contracts will likely be awarded. Is it the hope of BRS that those 5-10 contracts will cover the entire state (all counties and all high schools across the state) or simply expand the coverage provided under the School-to-Work Collaborative? Or will you plan to ramp up capacity over time?	<i>It is the hope of BRS that, based on the responses received and the extent of collaboration proposed, the awarded contracts will ensure broad access to PETS across several geographic areas of the state. As there are more than 50,000 students with disabilities, ages 14-22 in Indiana secondary schools, BRS will continue to expand capacity to ensure PETS are available to students statewide through additional initiatives beyond the scope of this RFF.</i>
Is there a minimum number of counties, schools/students expected or preferred to be served?	<i>There is no specific number of students expected to be served, however, the number of counties, schools and potential students that may be served will be considered when awarding funding to selected providers.</i>
The RFF states a grant award date of July 2016. What are the official funding dates/timeframe of this contract?	<i>It is anticipated that contracts will begin October 1, 2016.</i>
How important is a partnership with another VR provider to the implementation of proposed Pre-Employment Transition Services?	<i>BRS will consider a providers ability to collaborate in order to reach more students, when awarding funding to selected providers. BRS strongly encourages providers to collaborate with one another, as well as with area schools and any other relevant community</i>

	<i>resources to reach the largest number of students eligible to receive pre-employment transition services.</i>
What specific activities are you looking for in the provision of counseling on post-secondary education to the targeted population? (individual vs. group counseling)	<i>Specific activities may include, <u>but are not limited to</u>, providing information on the following: Community Colleges (AA/AS degrees, certificate programs and classes); Universities (Public & Private); Career pathways related workshops/training programs; Trade/Technical Schools; Military; Post-Secondary programs at community colleges and Universities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please also see page 2 of the RFF for additional information.</i>
Can applicants submit letters of support from potential partners with the grant application?	<i>Respondents may submit additional accompanying information, such as 'Letters of Support' with their application. Please be sure that the information is clearly defined and relevant to the services described within the RFF response.</i>
Can the curriculum material for the School-to-Work Collaborative be used for this request or does permission need to be obtained from the Institute?	<i>If any provider plans to use materials (such as curriculums, guidebooks, etc.) developed outside of their respective organization they must follow any rules/guideline specific to their agreement with the publisher of the materials. For the School to Work Collaborative, BRS would suggest contacting the Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) at Indiana University.</i>
RFF timeframe is close to the end of the school year. What if we cannot get school approval by the June 6th?	<i>BRS is interested in learning of schools in which a provider already has an existing relationship, which could be expanded for the provision of PETS. If a provider does <u>not</u> have an existing relationship with a school(s) prior to submitting the RFF response, the provider should identify the school(s) in which they desire a partnership, and their plan to conduct outreach with the school(s) in their area to develop a partnership for the provision of Pre-employment Transition services.</i>
Is the expectation of the RFF to involve VR employment service providers as part of the proposal or agree to work with provider as part of school transition services, i.e. transition councils?	<i>It is the expectation of BRS that respondents will partner with as many relevant organizations (i.e. other VR employment service providers, schools, etc.) as appropriate, to enable them to reach the maximum number of eligible students in their community for the provision of Pre-employment Transition Services. Respondents should list applicable partners who will assist in carrying out Pre-employment Transition services in line with requirements outlined in the RFF.</i>
Project SEARCH is an approach to assisting students with disabilities transition into the workforce and there are several CRPs in Indiana using it. Can Project SEARCH be an acceptable curriculum for the RFF?	<i>Project SEARCH materials are subject to licensing terms with the national Project SEARCH organization and may not be appropriate to transfer to other programs. BRS will obtain further clarification from the licensing entity.</i>
Since students don't need to be referred to VR to receive services, how will we let VR know who we are working with?	<i>For awarded contracts, it is expected that applicable data will be collected and shared with BRS including basic demographic information and the start date of PETS for each student. Please note that additional data requirements will be established upon release of</i>

	<i>WIOA federal regulations, as noted in the RFF (page 5). Applicable federally-required data elements are expected to be submitted along with billing, and this will be outlined in more detail in the awarded contracts.</i>
Understanding that a percentage of the VR annual budget will be set aside to fund the pre-employment transition services under these contracts, will VR be seeking a greater federal allocation by putting up more State dollars to effectively increase the State VR budget?	<i>At this time, BRS does <u>not</u> anticipate a need for additional state dollars to implement PETS. This will be re-evaluated each year.</i>
Is there a specific format preferred or required for the written proposal? i.e. page limits, type font size, double space, etc.?	<i>There is no specific format other than what has previously been outlined in the RFF.</i>
Can a proposal have more than one type of unit description for a particular service? For example, for group or classroom based services, can you have one rate for a week long class and one rate for a single session? The form does not allow more than one in its current form.	<i>Yes, the proposal should be as specific as possible, including rate descriptions, group size, number of individuals anticipated to receive services, etc. If formatting changes are made to the cost proposal (i.e. adding columns), please be sure the total amounts are accurately calculated, as any format changes may alter the auto-calculation formulas developed in the original cost proposal template.</i>
For group or classroom based services is the unit rate “per student” in the group?	<i>BRS will review proposed rates, whether student-based or group-based. VR funding for PETS is available for reimbursement for direct service provision only, in line with the five required areas outlined in the RFF, and BRS may negotiate fees based on review of proposed fees by all respondents to ensure an equitable reimbursement rate.</i>